

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Summary of the Office Action:

Claims 1-22 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 10, 12, and 13 have been amended. Claims 7, 11, and 15-22 have been canceled. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-4, 10, 14, 19, and 20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Tartaglia et al. (U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2002/0120178 A1).

Claims 5, 9, 15-18, 21, and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Tartaglia et al. in view of Chang (U.S. Pat. No. 5,779,624).

Claims 6-8 and 11-13 have been indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant's Response:

A. Claims 1-4, 10, 14, 19, and 20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Tartaglia et al. (U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2002/0120178 A1).

Independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of claim 7, indicated as being allowable, such that claim 1 recites “wherein the wire guide comprises a hub that precludes advancement of the wire guide”. Claim 7 has been canceled. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable over Tartaglia et al. and dependent claims 2-4, which depend ultimately from claim 1, are patentable for at least the same reasons.

Independent claim 10 has been amended to incorporate the features of claim 11, also indicated as being allowable, such that claim 10 recites “wherein the wire guide comprises a

flexible section that remains flexible when the wire guide is shape-locked”. Claim 11 has been canceled. Therefore, claim 10 is patentable over Tartaglia et al. and dependent claim 14, which depends from claim 10, is patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claims 19 and 20 have been canceled, without prejudice, thereby rendering the rejection of these claims moot.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Tartaglia et al.

B. Claims 5, 9, 15-18, 21, and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Tartaglia et al. in view of Chang.

Dependent claims 5 and 9 depend ultimately from claim 1 and are patentable over Tartaglia et al. for at least the reasons above. Chang, or any other reference, fails to cure the defects of Tartaglia et al. Furthermore, claims 15-22 have been canceled, without prejudice, thereby rendering the rejection of these claims moot.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Tartaglia et al. in view of Chang.

C. Claims 6-8 and 11-13 have been indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants acknowledge the allowable subject matter with thanks. However, in view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants contend that all claims are patentable and respectfully requests allowance thereof.

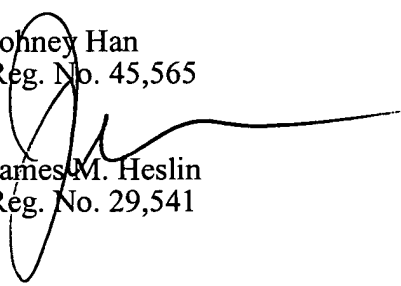
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,

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